

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 165 165

CS 204 623

AUTHOR Gee, Tom, Ed.
 TITLE Reading Children's Literature. Alberta English '78.
 INSTITUTION Alberta Teachers Association, Edmonton.
 PUB DATE 78
 NOTE 44p.; The English Language Arts Council of The Alberta Teachers Association is an affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English ; Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility
 JOURNAL CIT Alberta English; v17 n2 Entire Issue Fall 1978
 EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
 DESCRIPTORS *Adolescent Literature; *Childrens Literature; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Literature Appreciation; Novels; Parent Role; Preschool Education; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Materials; Recreational Reading; Teaching Techniques
 IDENTIFIERS Canada

ABSTRACT

The six articles in this journal deal with reading children's literature. The topics discussed are: the necessary immorality of reading teachers, leisure reading at a junior high school, classroom use of "The Pigman," adolescent reading, teaching the novel, and the role of parents in preschool education. The issue also contains a list of the most significant Canadian novels, a story and poems written by students, and book reviews. (FL)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Alberta English '78

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ENGLISH COUNCIL
OF THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Tom Gee, Editor
Glen Kirkland, Associate Editor

READING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

contents

	3	From the Editor
Graham Trentham	5	To the Editor
E.H. Rowell	10	On the Necessary Immorality of Reading Teachers
William R. Mallett	11	Leisure Reading at Riverbend Junior High
Beverly A. Haley	23	<i>The Pigman</i> — Use it!
Philomena Hauck	27	Adolescent Reading in Calgary
R. Glenn Martin	31	Teaching the Novel — an unpessimistic point of view
	34	The Most Significant Canadian Novels
	37	Give the Kids a Head Start
Connie Flanagan	39	The Day I Baby-sat
	40	Reviews
		Poems
Bill Van Veelen	4	Mountain Cycling
	30	Sky and water
Tom Gee	36	canadian novel conference, calgary
Joanne North	38	Home
	43	Word War

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Eng. Lang. Arts Council
of the Alberta Teachers' Association

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND
USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

Illustrations by Annabelle Lee Wright

ED165165

C 5224623

Executive of the English Language Arts Council 1978-79

PRESIDENT

Glen Kirkland, Edmonton

PAST PRESIDENT

Margaret Elliott, Calgary

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Janet Koper, Calgary

SECRETARY

Janet Clark, Edmonton

TREASURER

Dennis Thompson, Calgary

ATA REPRESENTATIVE

Frank Ackerman, Edmonton

EDITOR, *Alberta English*

Tom Gee, Grande Prairie

ASSOC. EDITOR, *Alberta English*

Glen Kirkland, Edmonton

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Roberta Knight, Calgary

EDITOR, *Alberta English Notes*

Joe Belanger, Edmonton

INSERVICE EDUCATION

Commandos - North

L. Darlene Groh, Edmonton

Commandos - South

Margaret Elliott, Calgary

PROGRAM CONVENERS

Lorna Hatridge, Edmonton

Verna Schraefel, Leduc

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

James Rennie, Calgary

Mavis Hagedorn, Hinton

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

REPRESENTATIVE

John Oster

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

REPRESENTATIVE

Ves Thomas

UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE

REPRESENTATIVE

Erma Shaw

Alberta English '78 is a publication of the English Language Arts Council, ATA. Annual membership fee of \$10 (for members of other ATA specialist councils, \$6; for university students, \$2; subscriptions, \$10), payable to the English Language Arts Council, ATA, 11010 - 142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1, entitles to all regular council publications. All manuscripts and correspondence about the contents of this magazine should be addressed to:

Mr. Tom Gee

Editor, *Alberta English*

Grande Prairie Regional Office of Education

Alberta Education, 500 Nordic Courts

10014 - 99 Street, Grande Prairie, AB, Canada T8V 3N4

Published by The Alberta Teachers' Association. Editorial and production service: Hilda M. Lindae, Communications Dept. All statements and views expressed in *Alberta English* are those of the individual authors, and not of the English Language Arts Council or the Association unless so stated.

Copyright © 1978 by the English Language Arts Council of The Alberta Teachers' Association. Material in *Alberta English* may not be reproduced without permission by the Council or under NCTE/CCTE agreements.

Member NCTE/CCTE Information Exchange

Indexed in NCTE/ERIC and in the Canadian Education Index

The cover is the work of Donald Harvey, Associate Professor, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Victoria.

From the Editor ...

Another English Conference, another milestone. The sessions I attended were excellent, stimulating and thought-provoking: Stephen Dunning's entertaining presentation on the teacher-as-writer was enthusiastically received by a packed house; Dr. Beverly Mitchell left all present convinced of the power of Canada's literary heritage; Dr. Farrell, banquet speaker, kept delegates and himself in stitches, as is usual whenever and wherever he speaks. Ken Weber, Robert and Marlene McCracken and others well known to English teachers in Alberta and internationally, and English teachers themselves, spoke to full sessions on topics K - 12 on all aspects of language arts.

However, for me, the highlight of the conference was the presentation of life membership in the Council to Frank Ackerman. Ack, as he signs his memos, has worked quietly behind the scenes for Alberta English teachers, and the English Council in particular, for more years than he will modestly admit to. We owe him a debt of acknowledgement that was expressed for us all in Theresa Ford's glowing accolades at the banquet.

Back at the ranch, another journal manuscript was due at Barnett House printing, and Hilda Lindae, ATA Specialist Councils editor, was exerting her subtle pressures for me to get it in. Much of what I had received dealt with reading and children's literature; hence this issue's theme, and an opportunity for your editor to ride a hobbyhorse.

With today's emphasis on using reading series, and these of somewhat dubious literary merit on occasion, school children frequently miss exposure to the wonderful stories that have been and are being created expressly for them. As well, with today's almost exclusive use of television, as opposed to radio, as a medium other than print for story-telling, the

visualizing aspects formerly left to the imagination of the radio listener (remember the Lone Ranger, Amos 'n Andy, Our Miss Brooks, the Shadow?) are now being provided. How much better able to visualize scenes described in books were yesterday's radio listeners with *their* listening backgrounds than are today's television viewers? There will never be conclusive supporting research data, but it is suspected that the visualizing component of radio listening then, as opposed to the ready-made visualizing of television viewing now, positively affected readers' ability to visualize what was read. Since this aspect of children's listening environment no longer exists, it is important to replace it with some other that gives practice in visualizing on the basis of what is heard. So, read to your students.

A little practice with a tape recorder will pay dividends in early attraction and retention of student attention. In order to avoid reading in a monotone, practise raising and lowering the *pitch* of your voice where the context of the story seems appropriate for it. As well, notice the *speed* at which you read. Don't read too slowly; conversational speed is appropriate, but vary your rate, increasing or decreasing it as seems appropriate to the context. *Volume* is also easy to control. Speak loudly or softly as context dictates. Finally, consider the emotional *tone* of your voice. Ordinarily, it should be mellow, non-abrasive; but again, if the context suggests it, use what seems appropriate. Especially in reading character dialogue aloud, try to modulate the tone of your voice to assume a sound appropriate to the personality of the character. In summary, listen for pitch, speed, volume, and tone and the variation of these in your voice as you play back the tape.

If possible, have a regular time each day, or each week, when you read to the students.

Begin with a brief summary, supplied orally by the students, of what has occurred in the story to date. Before each reading, assign something specific for which the students are to listen, and ask about it afterwards. Then read for a sustained period of 10 to 30 minutes depending on the age level of your students. (W.O. Mitchell's *Who Has Seen the Wind* has been read for 40 minutes every Friday afternoon to a Grade VIII class. Once it was begun, they thought of it as their reward for working well all week and insisted on it.)

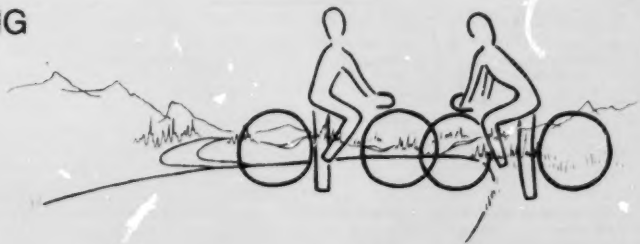
An annotated list of titles of some of the world's best children's literature for reading to students has been compiled by your editor. Grade levels are approximate and teachers need to determine the suitability of specific titles for their classes, but all levels, primary to senior high, are included. Undoubtedly as well, much of what has been suggested for one level is suitable for others as, for example, senior high students may be reading anywhere from elementary to adult level. Copies of the list are available free by writing the editor of *Alberta English*. ○

MOUNTAIN CYCLING

We made it,
Looking in silence,
from the top of the pass,
we stared back
at the road
we had come up.

The grey band of asphalt
had been endless.
Pedaling was no longer automatic.
Muscles complained
of overwork,
as we tried to conquer
gravity by heading for the sky.

We had only
52 miles left,
but we knew
it would be easy,
for it was all
downhill.



- Bill Van Veelen
Grade 11
Ross Sheppard High School
Edmonton

To the Editor ...

by **Graham Trentham**

Alberta English, Winter 1977-78, Volume 17, Number 1, focused on the very relevant theme of composition. It carried as one of its feature articles a piece by W.M. Lebens, Coordinator of the Effective Writing Programme at the University of Calgary. In his article, W.M. Lebens stated he hoped to dispell some of the misunderstanding and to answer some of the critics of the Effective Writing Test and assessment procedures. Rather than do that, W.M. Lebens proceeded to further obscure an issue that has been clouded since it arose in September, 1976. There were many reasons why the Effective Writing Test, its administration, its marking and its publicity aroused the ire of Calgary's secondary English teachers. In this article I hope to relate, from another point of view, some of the reasons for one of the truly unfortunate educational wars of this decade, a war that appears to be still going on, despite the best efforts of many to let it cease and to hope for better things.

Perhaps the first thing that needs clarifying in W.M. Lebens' article is his emphasis on the word "remedial." Emphasis on this word alone raises the ire of teachers of English who know that language learning is a continuous, ongoing process. Rather than run the Effective Writing Programme as a remedial programme, it should be instituted as a first-year course for freshmen. Freshmen can be admitted to the University of Calgary with a mark as low as 50 percent in English 30. In my view it follows naturally that many such students do not have the necessary English skills to allow them uninterrupted travel through their first year. Couple this with the fact that the University of Calgary offers no compulsory freshmen course in English of any kind, and the need for such a course becomes obvious. If

the university is willing to admit freshmen who are obviously weak in the most basic of subjects, it can hardly call its program a remedial one. It is simply a necessary one.

In the early part of his article, W.M. Lebens points out that the expressed need for the Effective Writing Programme came primarily from the faculties of Engineering and Business, as well as from the business and industrial community. According to W.M. Lebens, students at the university could not function adequately in their jobs because they could not write the reports and memoranda required of them. To my knowledge the University of Calgary does not teach, nor has it ever taught, report writing or memorandum writing. This is not even taught in the Effective Writing Programme.

Many situations presented themselves from August 27, 1976, to the time the results of the test written September 11 were released which paved the way for conflict between the University of Calgary and teachers of secondary English. On August 27, 1976, fifteen days prior to the writing of the Effective Writing Test, *The Calgary Herald* carried an article with the headline, "Half of University of Calgary freshmen may need remedial English." The writer, Vicki Barnett, went on to quote W.M. Lebens as saying that "according to the results of a preliminary test given to more than 600 freshmen during the last school year, 40 to 60 percent of students entering University in September will end up studying remedial English." Ms. Barnett noted that \$87,000 had been set aside for the programme. Teachers saw the test results that followed as a scheduled, planned attempt to fill an already created programme which already had a budget to be spent. It was hardly surprising when the Calgary daily *The Albertan* of September 11, 1976, printed the headline, "University freshmen can't write English."

The author is Secondary Specialist, Language Arts, for the Calgary School Board.

The article went on to explain that 55 percent of 2,060 students entering University of Calgary were judged to have severe writing difficulties. The prophecy was fulfilled neatly.

The same *Albertan* article added fuel to the fire by quoting W.M. Lebens as saying, "I'm very, very angry, not at the kids, but for the deficiencies they've been somehow allowed to develop in their writing of plain, ordinary English." Does that sound like the W.M. Lebens who wrote in *Alberta English*, "The test was ... not a test designed to discover who was at fault"? Teachers were angry, most of all because the media had been approached with such enthusiasm to spread the results of the test, and because the "anger" is, by implication, directed at teachers. As time went by, more and more information about the test became available, much of it from students who returned to their English 30 teachers to relate their experiences. One startling pattern began to emerge that was the talk of the schools for over a year. The test, which consisted of five excerpts from which students could choose as topics for a short essay, had weeded out *not* the borderline students, but some students with high marks in English 30, and there were not just a few of these students who had failed. Among the many failures were quite a number who had been Grade XII scholarship winners and some who had been school valedictorians.

Teachers began to study the test closely, and a number of disturbing things emerged. First, the five excerpts had been taken from publications with a special readership. They were not selected from *The Calgary Herald* or *The Albertan*, not even *Maclean's* magazine. Two excerpts were from the *New Yorker*, one from the *Sunday Times*, one from Pierre Trudeau's political writings and one from a book by Michael Novak entitled *Family Out of Favour*.

The first Effective Writing Test (Form A) was definitely weak. In the general instructions the students were told to "answer the questions related" to each quote. No questions followed any of the quoted excerpts.

The excerpts were cause for further concern. All but one were non-Canadian, and every one was far removed from the average high school student's realm of interest or exposure. Despite what W.M. Lebens says in *Alberta English*, the excerpts were not ones about which students could be presumed to have some general knowledge. The university personnel responsible were quick to state the excerpts were ones which compared closely with the real situation which the students would find in university classes. It was not stated, however, that in classes the students would have had some exposure to the material and the context in which it was used before they were tested on it. In addition, the students would have come to know their instructors and would have known the expectations of the audience which was to mark and evaluate their writing.

In addition, when a readability scale was applied to the excerpts, the scale showed the reading level of each excerpt to be consistently at a post-secondary difficulty level. Because the students encountering them were totally inexperienced at a post-secondary level, this factor alone would impede the fluency of responses based on such excerpts.

It was also significant to note that the Alberta Grade XII curriculum focuses specifically on the study of literary style. No opportunity was available on this first Effective Writing Test for students to use knowledge gained from experience in the classroom. Because the excerpts all dealt with some aspect of sociology, it could almost be assumed the test was aimed at examining the

students' sociological knowledge rather than their knowledge of writing skills.

The excerpts were not exactly literary gems in themselves. One contained an error in grammar. Another contained a very confusing introductory sentence.

One of the reasons for so many failures becomes obvious in the *Alberta English* article. W.M. Lebens states, "the excerpt or passage and the accompanying questions provided ideas, limited the topic, suggested a structure and organization and turned the student outward from himself and the expression of his feelings towards logical ideas and assertions supported with reasoned judgement." Any of the respected names in language learning (Britton, Poulet, Chomsky, Bateson, Smith, Halliday, Moffett) would suggest that a writer should never be "turned outward from himself" until the writer has had time to acquaint himself with the material to be dealt with in such a way as to provide the writer with a fluency that permits him to control his material. The students who wrote the test were dealing with unfamiliar material in unfamiliar territory, writing for an unknown audience, and they knew that they were being evaluated. If they failed, the prize was a compulsory non-credit course to be added to their first-year subject load.

On the way to winning the prize, the student was expected to make a plan and at least one rough draft, and these were to be written on the left-hand side of the examination booklet. The final draft would be written on the right and should be clear and legible. This was all to be done in two hours, although W.M. Lebens implies that three hours were available in 1976. Such was not the case. In the *Alberta English* article he goes on to quote topics from the new versions of the test. No mention is given of the original 1976 topics.

In summary, the test appeared to have been designed by a committee which was unfamiliar with the nature of the high school graduate, his interests, reading habits and experiences. The question could also be raised about how much the committee knew with regard to language learning and the development of reading-writing skills on the part of the adolescent.

The next information that became available to teachers in the schools was information dealing with the evaluation of those effective writing tests of September 11, 1976. It was learned that each test paper had the student's name at the top of each page, the name of the high school attended, and the student's English 30 mark as well. This procedure alone violated every rule of evaluation, not to mention good taste. W.M. Lebens remarks in *Alberta English*: "Careless slips were overlooked and no paper was declared unsatisfactory, contrary to popular testimony, that did not demonstrate considerable deficiencies in more than one category." I can only fault W.M. Lebens on his use of the word "popular" before testimony. If he would like names of students who were failed on the basis of a minimum number of misspelled words and questionably misplaced commas, their names are available. It is only fair to say that these same students did appeal their marks and were subsequently passed.

W.M. Lebens goes on to say, "Teachers saw the test as a deliberate charge that they could not teach adequately." Perhaps he has forgotten his own statements to the press in September, 1976. It was those statements, more than the results of the test that resulted in the teachers' anger. Teachers have always believed the university has every right to test its students and to do what it pleases with the results, but it has no right to make a public

furor and imply blame without adequate basis.

Two violations of good public relations were made on the part of the Effective Writing Programme personnel. One involved statements by some instructors to their classes which included introductory remarks such as: "The first thing you can do in this course is to forget everything you were taught in high school English classes." Such statements were brought back to high school teachers by puzzled and anxious former students. The second incident involved a list of Calgary high schools which ranked the schools in order of performance by their students on the Effective Writing Test. The list provided no useful information for the schools such as a breakdown of what specific problems students in a given school appeared to have. As it stood, the list simply provided the opportunity for schools to compare one another even though the programs of each school were set and designed to meet the needs of a particular type of student. Of course, no consideration was given to the fact that the number of students sent to university varied widely from school to school.

Perhaps the great tragedy that surrounds this issue is the failure on the part of the University of Calgary to see possible reasons for the fact that university freshmen do not write as well as they might. If the University had used the results of the test to plead the case of senior high school English teachers with large classes which grow larger each year, with shrinking preparation time and with growing other responsibilities, the result would have been much different. Such was not the case. Had the University taken a supportive role, perhaps pressure to alleviate problems faced by teachers in their work might have produced results. Had such an approach been taken, the test's many flaws

would have been much less significant. Instead, university personnel took an adversary role and created an atmosphere of hostility and distrust that still exists today, almost two years later.

Going further in W.M. Lebars' article, I wish to take issue with the statement, "The test was carefully marked." That, too, was debatable when the 1976 test was marked. Many changes in evaluation of subsequent tests have been made since that time. In the marking of the 1976 test even other university professors could not agree that the marking procedures used were valid. The objectivity of the marking was questioned within the university. For example, when a test paper was marked a second time, the first mark was on the paper for the second marker to see. The fact that some students had foreign names on their papers was questioned because the name might have suggested to the examiner that the student's native language was not English before a word was read. It is no wonder, considering that the papers carried the students' names, schools, English 30 grades, their place of birth, in addition to the previous marker's mark, that the papers were consistently marked. It would have been surprising if they had not been consistently marked. Add to this the fact that the markers knew a high failure rate had been predicted and that the structure and budget of the Effective Writing Programme had already been set up, and what could have resulted but the 55 percent failure rate? No workshops were established in 1976 to provide markers (from all faculties) with guidelines to use in marking. One University of Calgary professor criticized the test and its evaluation procedures as "lacking scholarly rigor." It is apparent that if the University did try, "by whatever means it could devise, to ensure that a fair and accurate judgement was

made," as W.M. Lebans says, it did not try hard enough that first time.

In concluding his article, W.M. Lebans states, "That the University has assisted students to overcome deficiencies demonstrated in this year's test has been demonstrated by pass rates on successive tests, by the testimony of assessors and by the experience of instructors." Such did not seem to be the case in the spring of 1977 when the University College Research Committee Report on the Effective Writing Programme was released. The report states, "The validity of the Effective Writing Test must be established before it can be considered an adequate test of writing ability. The potential validity of the test is already somewhat undermined on the basis of less than desirable consistency in the assessment procedure ..." So it has been stated within the University, in a report commissioned by the University, that the assessment procedures were not consistent. The report also states, "... findings suggest that those students enrolled in the Effective Writing Programme who have greater ability in writing English are more likely to complete the EWP than those with

lesser ability, which, of course, is what would be expected if the programme is training students in writing skills. However, the degree of transfer of skills acquired in the EWP to subsequent performance in written assignments does not appear to be great, since completion of the EWP in the fall was not significantly associated with better performance in English 201 assignments in the following winter session. It may thus be worth examining further the long term effects of the EWP on writing skills."

One of the paradoxes of the situation that has arisen between the University of Calgary's Effective Writing Programme personnel and the secondary teachers of English in the city is the fact that articles such as the one by W.M. Lebans keep appearing so long after the fact. The whole confrontation was unfortunate and created more damage than will be repaired very quickly. But to keep on making public the same past, unfortunate history is regrettable. I, too, am guilty of cleaning the skeletons from the closet once more, and I hope it has been done for the last time. O

On the Necessary Immorality of Reading Teachers

by **E.H. Rowell**

Too often reading teachers are cast out into the real world of reading problems with only ideas for diagnosis and remediation, or perhaps a few for motivation. One essential preparation is frequently missing from teacher education: the awakening of an awareness of aspects of morality that are crucial on the job but are often overlooked in teacher training classes.

A reading teacher should believe strongly in immorality. One who is worthy of the proud title of Reading Teacher should be capable of sinking to the lowest depths of depravity to accomplish her aims. Morality should *never* get in the way of good teaching.

A dedicated reading teacher should take lessons from the most ancient profession and learn to fall "in love" at sight with all of her charges, disregarding the extent or nature of their disabilities. She should be a mistress of the art of deceit and should be able without a twitch to look at the least appealing child under her care and convincingly say, "Joseph, I know the book is hard (a preprimer), but I think if you really try and I help you, you *can* read it" — or after a five-minute monotonous recitation on "My trip to the Seven/Eleven store with my brother" be able without a quiver to say, "How exciting — just wait until I get it all down for a wonderful story that you can read."

E.H. Rowell, an assistant professor at Rhode Island College, teaches undergraduate and graduate reading courses. This article is reprinted with permission from The Reading Teacher.

Ms. Reading Teacher should have the quick fingers of the nimble pickpocket or the sly cunning of the most daring espionage agent as she secretly steals ideas from cronies, adapts them to her own use, and boldly passes them on. She should be as adept as the most proficient cardshark as she slyly stacks the deck so her discouraged darlings can get the thrill that comes from winning a phonics or sight word game.

She should be a mistress of disguises so that she can put on a false front of self-composure and assurance when dealing with irate parents or hyperactive children, and she should be a two-faced creature with the ability to size up her principal and superintendent and present an acceptable façade as she learns to go underground to accomplish her aims for her charges.

A dedicated reading person should be able to grovel convincingly and be a mistress of the art of shedding crocodile tears when begging for additional supplies or trying to con a manufacturer out of free materials. She should adopt the brash glib of the carny hooker to convince her students of the fascinating treats in store when they finally get to open the star-studded pages of the preprimer or HILD books, and she should know how to use her womanly wiles to flirtatiously wind the custodian around her perfume-reeking finger as he comes helplessly at the mercy of her beck and call to carry books, build carrels, and help make the room say "Reading is Great."

In short, a dedicated reading teacher should have as her guiding light the theme, "All is fair in love, in war, and in teaching reading." ○

Leisure Reading at Riverbend Junior High

by ***William R. Mallett***

Last year I had my first experience as a librarian in a junior high school. During locker clean-ups I saw shelves bulging with leisure reading books, many of which had not been borrowed from the school library. I also observed students with books sticking out of back pockets and purses. Yet when the same students came to the library, they sometimes asked, "Why don't you have any good books here?" This made me realize that I did not know what titles were preferred by students to read in their leisure time. Nor did I know the format (paperback or hardback) most desired, who, if anyone, had recommended to the students the books they were reading, and from what sources the students were obtaining books. It seemed to me that knowledge of the students' book reading preferences and habits would enable me to build a better school library collection of leisure reading materials and to establish the type of library reading guidance program which would be more effective in encouraging the reading of worthwhile books.

The adults of today have become a society of non-readers. As Ashley (1972) points out, 95 percent of American adults are non-habitual readers. Who is to blame? Is our school system not satisfying the reading needs of children that they find so little use for books in adult life? Has modern society had the effect of discouraging reading? Ashley suggests that our children are basically different from their predecessors as the result of influences such as television.

Hovious (1974) found when she questioned children as to why they weren't reading leisure books, they usually answered, "I'm just not interested (in reading) (p.374)." She feels that a teacher can help students develop

an interest in reading by finding out what they like to read and using this as a starting point. This thought is echoed by Pilgrim (1968) who believes that if the purpose of teaching literature in the junior high school is to make readers of students, then "a knowledge of the interests and needs of these early adolescents as applied to books must be maintained and used as fully as possible (p.52)."

In a speech at the 1970 International Reading Association Conference (Painter, 1971), Huck expressed concern that our schools are not fulfilling their role in the reading program. She said, "If we teach a child to read, yet develop not the taste for reading, all our teaching is for naught. We shall have produced a nation of 'illiterate literates' — those who know how to read, but do not read. The major purpose of teaching children to read is to help them become readers who readily turn to books for information and enjoyment (p.37)."

Jenkinson (1974) repeated this idea when he said that the librarian's goal to produce life-long readers is thwarted by a curriculum which centers on product-centered reading rather than instilling in the child the purpose and love of reading.

Fader (1968) showed concern over children's lack of interest in reading. The students he interviewed felt that their English courses were irrelevant and the teacher was not reaching out to them. They went on to say, "there was never nothing to read that was any good, even if you wanted to read (p.9)." From this Fader launched a program of inundating students with a large number of paperbacks in the hope that they would find some titles they would enjoy. He admits that he had formerly censored books, such as James Bond, without even bothering to read them. He found that his program of giving students a wide selection of current books in paperback

The information in this article is extracted from Mr. Mallett's master thesis.

format was a very successful method of producing readers. Fader's conclusions seem to confirm that many teachers and librarians are out of step with the modern student.

Other authors have expressed concern over teachers' lack of knowledge of children's reading interests. Teachers are assigning book reports on books such as *Lassie Come Home* which do not really touch on problems of interest to children (Meade, 1973). There is a tendency for teachers to remember the books they read as children, but to not make allowances for the changes which have taken place in children and their interests (Ashley, 1972). Again it is suggested that the fact that Newbery award books are seldom popular indicates that experts in children's literature do not always know what children like to read (Meade, 1973).

From surveying this literature it may be concluded that if the goal is to develop life-long readers, one must first ascertain children's interests.

Norvell (1958) reports that reading interests vary according to sex, and that all children of an age group and with the same sex have similar reading interests regardless of intelligence. McCarty (1950) found that girls read more than boys, but boys read more non-fiction than girls. When children enter the 'teens' they become more interested in books about teen-agers. Interest also increases in mystery stories and in books on sports and recreational activities, while interest in cowboys and fairy tales decreases (Meade, 1973).

The teen-age boy seems to like to read about adventure, sports and games, science fiction and mystery. Girls prefer mystery, romance, and humor (Purves, 1972; Taylor, 1957).

Of historical interest is a survey published by Jordan in 1926 which showed the 10 most

popular books with teen-age boys to be *Boy Scout Series*, *Call of the Wild*, *Treasure Island*, *Motor Boy Series*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Billy Whiskers*, *Ivanhoe*, *Tom Sawyer*, and *Penrod*. The same survey indicated that teen-age girls liked *Pollyanna*, *Freckles*, *Little Women*, fairy tales, *Girl of the Limberlost*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Elsie Dinsmore*, *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, *Boy Scout Series*, and *Laddie*.

In 1944, Rankin found that the ten most popular books with teen-agers were *Sue Barton*, *Senior Nurse*, *The Good Master*, *Caddie Woodlawn*, *Silver Chief*, *Dog of the North*, *Mountain Girl*, *The Jinx Ship*, *Silver Chief to the Rescue*, *Who Rides in the Dark*, *Peggy Covers the News*, and *Sue Barton, Student Nurse*. She notes that all these books were published between 1927 and 1937 and all were on approved lists for young people.

In 1958, Norvell reported that the following novels were popular with students in Grades VII to IX: *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Call of the Wild*, *Oliver Twist*, *Secret Garden*, *Treasure Island*, *Men of Iron*, *Covered Wagon*, and *The Virginian*.

Since these lists were compiled, teen-age problem books have become popular and junior high school students are reading more sophisticated books. Girls who were once reading *Sue Barton*, *Student Nurse* are now reading *Tolstoy* and *Paton* (Meade, 1973). Slow readers in Grade IX were found to be reading *Hawaii* and *Travels with Charlie* (Millet, 1963).

Jenkinson (1974) felt a concern that there was either little research being done on Canadian teen-age reading habits or it was not being reported. Therefore, he did a survey to discover the titles most popular with Manitoba teen-agers and compared the results with recent American studies.

A questionnaire was mailed out to librarians of junior and senior high schools, asking them to report on the reading

preferences of their students. It was found that a very wide range of titles were being read by junior high school students, with 785 different titles reported, of which 563 were mentioned only once. The 10 most popular books with junior high students were *The Guinness Book of World Records*, *Karen*, *Go Ask Alice*, *Phoebe*, *Love Story*, *The Outsiders*, *Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl*, *Mr. and Mrs. Bo-Jo Jones*, *My Darling*, *My Hamburger*, and *Going on Sixteen*. Of the 30 most popular titles, Jenkinson observed that most were people-centered.

Jenkinson also reported that of the books requested, but not stocked by the school libraries, the *Hardy Boys* and *Nancy Drew Series* were the most sought-after. The most frequently requested titles by junior high students were the *Exorcist*, followed by *The Happy Hooker* and *The Godfather*. Television created an interest in books based on television series such as "Get Smart" and "Kung Fu", and it appeared to stimulate an interest in reading the classics which have been televised.

Other observations made by the school librarians who answered Jenkinson's questionnaire were that paperback format was preferred, reading interest declined with age, friends seemed to be the greatest influence on book choice, and girls read many more books than boys.

It was found that books popular with Manitoba teen-agers were also popular with American teen-agers; however, Canadian teen-agers were different from their American counterparts in the popularity they accorded hockey stories. Therefore, Jenkinson felt that United States surveys were relevant for Canadians, although he introduced a note of caution, pointing out that as most selection aids are American-oriented, Canadian authors usually do not appear on these lists.

Reviewing these historical studies of popular teen-age book titles, it appears that each

generation reads a different set of books, and if we want to influence young people to read, we must find out their present interests in reading.

Research has indicated that a reading peak is reached during the junior high school years (Purves, 1972). This suggests that the junior high school offers the last opportunity to develop life-long reading habits.

Table I indicates that the main source of leisure reading books is from the student's home. However, the Grade VII girls obtained slightly more books from the school and public libraries than they did from home and the Grade IX boys bought more books than they obtained from home. A combined borrowing of books from school and public library was the main source of books for Grade VII girls. The Grade VII boys obtained most of their books at home, although the public library played an important role. Grade VIII girls found the majority of their books at home, but borrowing from friends was also a significant source. Grade VIII boys used home as the major source of titles, as did the Grade IX girls. However, the Grade IX girls also bought many books and borrowed a number from friends. Grade IX boys bought a large proportion of their books and obtained the rest from a variety of sources. The school library provided books for Grade VIII girls and boys and Grade IX boys. In each grade, girls had a tendency to borrow books from friends, while this was not such a significant source for boys. The Grade IX students bought a significant number of books, while other grades did not, particularly Grade VIII girls who bought very few titles. Book clubs were not popular with any grade and did not make a contribution to the source of leisure reading books.

Students were asked to suggest who had the greatest influence on them in choosing

their leisure reading books. Table II shows the factors that influence these students in choosing books. There is only a very general pattern of similarity among the grades, with either "friends" or "no one" exerting the main influence. The school librarian had very little influence on the students, particularly in Grade IX. Classroom teachers were quite influential, especially in Grade VII. Friends were a predominant factor, but always more so with girls than with boys and especially in Grade VIII. Family members were prominent factors in influencing reading choice, but the influence was most prevalent in Grade VII and declined in Grades VIII and IX. Many children relied on no one for advice in selecting books, the Grade IX students being the most self-reliant. Movies and book reviews had little influence on reading choice. Television was not mentioned by the students as a factor in book selection.

In an effort to discover what book format students preferred, students were asked to indicate their preference for paperback or hardcover books or whether they had no preference. The data is reported in Table III, which indicates that the paperback was a very popular format with the students. The hardcover format was chosen by few students, but a great many students, particularly in Grade VII, did not express a preference for either format. Compared to Grade VII, the percentage of students in Grades VIII and IX showing a preference for the paperback format was almost twice as high. There was no definite pattern showing preferences in format by sex.

Students were asked to list all books they had voluntarily read in their leisure time and had enjoyed during the school year. Table IV indicates that while there was no consistent pattern in the average number of books read

by boys and girls, the number did not vary greatly between the sexes. However, Grade VII students, both boys and girls, read fewer books than Grade VIII and IX students. The boys and girls in all three grades read 724 books, an average of 5.4 each.

Table V shows the books most popular with Grade VII students. The most popular book with boys and girls in Grade VII was *Jaws*. *The Call of the Wild* has remained popular over the years and is still being read by Grade VII students. The "social problem" books were not popular with Grade VII students, particularly the boys. Grade VII boys seemed to be influenced by television as they listed books based on television programs. They were the only group to list titles in a subliterate series, *Hardy Boys*.

Table VI shows the books most popular with Grade VIII students, who, in comparison to Grade VII students, listed more books and listed books at a much higher reading level. "Social problem" books interested Grade VIII students. *Durango Street*, *Nitty Gritty*, and *Viva Chicano* were listed by both Grade VIII boys and girls, indicating that both sexes were interested in books by F. Bonham. Both boys and girls indicated that they had enjoyed *That Was Then, This Is Now*, which again shows an overlap in preferences. The Grade VIII boys in particular were reading adult-type books such as *The Andromeda Strain*, *Day of the Jackal*, and *The French Connection*.

Table VII shows the books most popular with students of Grade IX. These pupils were also interested in some "social problem" books and some adult books, such as *Papillon*, and *The Godfather*. The Grade IX girls expressed an interest in mystery stories and two girls listed the lengthy novel *Gone With the Wind*. The boys of Grade IX indicated an interest in books about space travel.

TABLE I
SOURCES OF LEISURE READING BOOKS
BY GRADE AND SEX

Sources of Books	Grade VII (N = 43)						Grade VIII (N = 46)						Grade IX (N = 44)					
	Girls		Boys		Total		Girls		Boys		Total		Girls		Boys		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
School library	3	7.0	5	11.6	8	18.6	8	17.4	8	17.4	16	34.9	4	9.1	9	20.5	13	29.5
Public library	3	7.0	9	20.9	12	27.9	3	6.5	2	4.3	5	10.7	1	2.3	6	13.6	7	15.9
Both school and public library about the same	11	25.6	4	9.3	15	34.9	1	2.2	8	17.4	9	19.6	3	6.8	2	4.5	5	11.4
At home	10	23.3	10	23.3	20	46.5	14	30.4	15	32.6	29	63.0	12	27.3	10	22.7	22	50.0
Borrow from a friend	6	14.0	2	4.7	8	18.6	11	23.9	2	4.3	13	28.3	9	20.5	1	2.2	10	22.7
Book clubs	1	2.3	1	2.3	2	4.7	1	2.2	2	4.3	3	6.5	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.
Other																		
(a) buy	4	9.3	6	14.0	10	23.3	1	2.2	4	8.7	5	10.9	10	22.7	11	25.	21	47.7
(b) didn't specify	1	2.3	1	2.3	2	4.7	0	0.	1	2.2	1	2.2	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.

TABLE II
STUDENT INFLUENCES IN CHOOSING BOOKS
BY GRADE AND SEX

Influences on Students	Grade VII (N=43)						Grade VIII (N=46)						Grade IX (N=44)					
	Girls		Boys		Total		Girls		Boys		Total		Girls		Boys		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
School librarian	1	2.3	0	0.	1	2.3	3	6.5	0	0.	3	6.5	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.
Teacher	6	14.0	2	4.7	8	18.6	2	4.3	3	6.5	5	10.7	1	2.3	3	6.8	4	9.1
Friend	10	23.3	6	14.0	16	37.2	17	37.0	9	19.6	26	56.5	12	27.3	4	9.1	16	36.4
Member of your family	8	18.6	10	23.3	18	41.9	7	16.3	11	23.9	18	39.1	3	6.8	8	18.2	11	25.0
No one	10	23.3	12	27.9	22	51.2	5	10.7	14	30.4	19	41.3	18	40.9	14	31.8	32	72.7
Others																		
(a) myself	1	2.3	1	2.3	2	4.7	1	2.2	0	0.	1	2.2	0	0.	1	2.3	1	2.3
(b) movies	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.	1	2.2	1	2.2	0	0.	1	2.3	1	2.3
(c) book reviews	0	0.	1	2.3	1	2.3	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.	1	2.3	1	2.3
(d) the writer	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0	0.	1	2.3	0	0.	1	2.3

TABLE III
PREFERRED FORMAT OF BOOKS
BY GRADE AND SEX

Preferred Format	Grade VII (N=43)						Grade VIII (N=46)						Grade IX (N=44)					
	Girls		Boys		Total		Girls		Boys		Total		Girls		Boys		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Paperback	8	18.6	4	9.0	12	27.9	12	26.1	14	30.4	26	56.5	9	20.5	13	29.5	22	50.0
Hardcover	0	0.	1	2.3	1	2.3	0	0.	1	2.2	1	2.2	0	0.	1	2.3	1	2.3
Doesn't matter	12	27.9	18	41.9	30	69.8	7	15.2	12	26.1	19	41.3	13	29.5	8	17.4	21	47.7

TABLE IV
NUMBER OF BOOKS READ

	Grade	Number of Students	Number of Books Read	Mean
7	Girls	20	100	5.0
	Boys	23	97	4.2
8	Girls	19	112	5.9
	Boys	27	155	5.8
9	Girls	22	119	5.4
	Boys	22	141	6.4
	All Grades	133	724	5.4

TABLE V
FAVORITE BOOKS OF GRADE VII STUDENTS

	Book Title	Frequency
Girls	Jaws	9
	The Call of the Wild	4
	Déenie	3
	Rascal	3
	Souder	3
	Are You There God? it's Me, Margaret	2
	Man O'War	2
	These Happy Golden Years	2
Boys	Jaws	6
	Hardy Boys Series	3
	S.W.A.T. No. 3 Crossfire	3
	Airport	2
	The Call of the Wild	2
	Killer Pine	2
	The Making of Star Trek	2
	R.I.P. Foster Ride the Grey Planet	2
	Space 199 — Break Away	2
	The War of the Worlds	2

TABLE VI
FAVORITE BOOKS OF GRADE VIII STUDENTS

	Book Title	Frequency
Girls	Jaws	7
	Lisa Bright and Dark	4
	That Was Then, This Is Now	4
	Durango Street	3
	Go Ask Alice	3
	Bless the Beasts and the Children	2
	The Cross and the Switchblade	2
	Going Steady	2
	Mash Goes to London	2
	Mr. & Mrs. Bo-Jo Jones	2
	Morris	2
	Nectar in a Sieve	2
	Nitty Gritty	2
	The Other Side of the Mountain	2
	Tuned Out	2
	Viva Chicano	2
Boys	Jaws	10
	That Was Then, This Is Now	4
	Dracula	3
	Durango Street	3
	The French Connection	3
	Nectar in a Sieve	3
	Airport	2
	The Andromeda Strain	2
	Cool Cat	2
	Day of the Jackal	2
	Fantastic Voyage	2
	The 49th Street Crusaders	2
	Guns and Ammo Annual	2
	Nitty Gritty	2
	On the Beach	2
	The Pigman	2
	Rat River Trapper	2
	That Was Then, This Is Now	2
	Viva Chicano	2

TABLE VII
FAVORITE BOOKS OF GRADE IX STUDENTS

	Book Title	Frequency
Girls	Jaws	10
	Sunshine	4
	The Sunshine Years	4
	Animal Farm	3
	The Contender	3
	Evil Under the Sun	3
	That Was Then, This Is Now	3
	Lanco	2
	Black Like Me	2
	Gone With the Wind	2
	Mr. & Mrs. Bo-Jo Jones	2
	Murder on the Orient Express	2
	The Outsiders	2
	Papillon	2
	Teacup Full of Roses	2
Boys	Jaws	7
	Animal Farm	4
	Day of the Jackal	3
	Papillon	3
	The Swarm	3
	Beyond Earth: Man's Contact with U.F.O.'s	2
	The Brand New Monty Python	2
	The Godfather	2
	The Harrad Experiment	2
	Helter Skelter	2
	Journey to the Centre of the Earth	2
	The Martian Chronicles	2
	No Earthly Explanation	2
	Rats	2
	Serpico	2
	When Eagles Dare	2
	Wooden Horse	2

TABLE VIII
MOST POPULAR TITLES

Book Title	Frequency	Book Title	Frequency
Jaws	49	The Two Towers	4
That Was Then, This Is Now	12	Bless the Beasts and the Children	3
Animal Farm	8	Chariots of the Gods	3
The Call of the Wild	8	Cool Cat	3
Durango Street	6	The Cross and the Switchblade	3
The Contender	5	Deenie	3
Day of the Jackal	5	Dracula	3
Go Ask Alice	5	Evil Under the Sun	3
Helter Skelter	5	The 49th Street Crusaders	3
The Other Side of the Mountain	5	Go Ask Alice	3
Papillon	5	The Godfather, Part I	3
Sunshine	5	Hardy Boy Series	3
Airport	4	It Shouldn't Happen to a Vet	3
The Fellowship of the Ring	4	Love Story	3
The French Connection	4	Murder on the Orient Express	3
Lisa Bright and Dark	4	On the Beach	3
Mr. & Mrs. Bo-Jo Jones	4	The Pigman	3
Nitty Gritty	4	The Red Pony	3
The Outsiders	4	S.W.A.T. No. 3 Crossfire	3
The Return of the King	4	The Swarm	3
Souder	4	Tuned Out	3
The Sunshine Years	4	The War of the Worlds	3

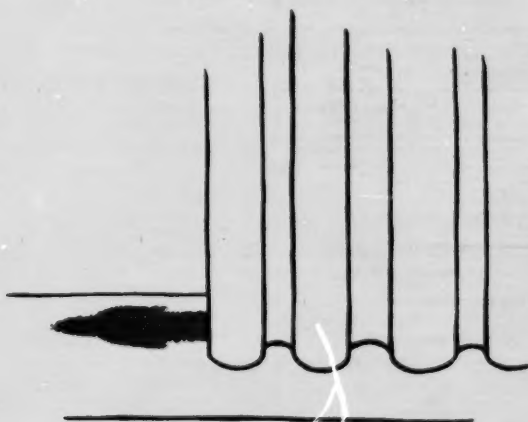
Each grade seemed to have favorite books, and there was little overlap among the three grades. A great number of the books read by these students have appeared on recommended reading lists for young people and adults.

Many titles were listed only once, and were not considered when compiling the lists of popular leisure reading books. Few Newbery award books were listed; also sex-oriented books did not seem to play a significant role in students' leisure reading selections. There were not many "subliterature" books mentioned, although the Grade VII boys did favor books such as the *Hardy Boys Series* and *S.W.A.T. No. 3 Crossfire*. Several boys listed nonfiction books as enjoyable, but the girls listed no nonfiction books. In a few cases some quite juvenile books such as *Stuart Little* and *Charlotte's Web* were listed. Some students were reading the classics, such as books by the Bronte sisters, H.G. Wells, and Jules Verne. Canadian authors did not fare well, with L.M. Montgomery, F. Mowat, P. Berton, and F. Braithwaite the only ones mentioned. In-

dividual students seemed to get on a "subject kick" and read only science fiction or mystery books.

Each class had to read at least one novel for the language arts program. In spite of the fact that it was mentioned to the students that the books to be listed in this survey were those read voluntarily, a number of students included these required books. Possibly these were the only books read by some students, and they felt that they had to list some titles.

Table VIII indicates the most popular titles without regard to the grade level or sex of the students, and thus provides an overview of the popularity of titles. Certain books such as *The Fellowship of the Ring* were not popular with any one grade or sex and therefore did not appear in the earlier tables of favorite books, but they were popular with a cross section of the students when grade and sex were ignored. The table shows the great popularity of *Jaws*. The next most popular book, *That Was Then, This Is Now*, was far behind in popularity. ○



Bibliography

- Ashley, L.F. *Children's Reading in the 1970's*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972.
- Davies, Ruth Ann. *The School Library Media Center; a Force for Educational Excellence*, 2nd ed. New York: Bowker, 1974.
- Ducat, Sister Mary Peter Claver. "Student and Faculty Use of the Library in Three Secondary Schools." Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1960.
- Fader, Daniel N., and Elton B. McNeil. *Hooked on Books: Program and Proof*. New York: Berkley Medallion Books, 1968.
- Gaver, Mary. *Effectiveness of Centralized Library Service in Elementary Schools*, 2nd ed. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers, 1963.
- Hovious, Marilyn. "Motivating Junior High Readers," *Journal of Reading*. Vol. 17, 1973-74, February 1974, pp.373-5.
- Jenkinson, David. "Have You Read ...? The Results of a Survey of Young Adult Reading in the Province of Manitoba," *Manitoba School Library — Audio Visual Association Journal*, 2:43-60 September 1974.
- Jenkinson, David. "The Independent Reading Interest of Fifth Grade Pupils and the Interest Content of Selected Basal Readers." Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Alberta, 1973.
- Jesson-Dibley, David, Robin Atthill, and Roland Earl. "What Do They Read?" *English*, 13:55-8, Summer 1960.
- Jordan, Arthur. *Children's Interest in Reading*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1926.
- Kujoth, Jean Spealman (compiler). *Reading Interests of Children and Young Adults*. Metchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1970.
- McCarty, Pearl S. "Reading Interests Shown by Choices of Books in School Libraries," *School Review*, 58:90-6, February 1950.
- Meade, Richard A., and Robert C. Small Jr. (editors). *Literature for Adolescents; Selection and Use*. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1973.
- Millet, Esther. "We Don't Even Call These Books!" *Top of the News*, 20:45-7, October 1963.
- Norvell, George W. *What Boys and Girls Like to Read*. Morristown, N.J.: Silver Burdett, 1958.
- Painter, Helen W., editor. *Reaching Children and Young People Through Literature*. Newark, Del.: International Reading Association, 1971.
- Pilgrim, Geneva Hanna, and Mariana K. McAllister. *Books, Young People and Reading Guidance*. 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1968.
- Purves, Alan C., and Richard Beach. *Literature and the Reader: Research in Response to Literature, Reading Interests, and the Teaching of Literature*. Urbana-Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois, 1972.
- Rankin, Marie. "Children's Interest in Library Books of Fiction." *Teachers College Contributions to Education*, 906. New York Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944.
- Soares, Anthony T. "Salient Elements of Recreational Reading of Junior High School Students." *Elementary English*, 40:843-5, December 1963.
- Strang, Ruth. "Scope of Adolescent Interests." *Education*, 83:463-7, April 1973.
- Taylor, Marion W., and Mary A. Schneider. "What Books Are Our Children Reading? The Reading Interests of Upper-Grade Pupils." *Chicago Schools Journal*, 38:155-60, February 1957.

The Pigman — Use it!

by **Beverly A. Haley**

How many novels have you used for classroom study that everyone thoroughly enjoys?

I have found one.

Paul Zindel's *The Pigman* has met with unqualified success among my students. Apparently they have been effective as public relations men, too, because students from other classes have come asking for copies to read on their own.

Zindel has presented us with a rare gift — a story students like plus a novel that is a veritable treasure for exemplifying how an author works — all wrapped up in one package labelled *The Pigman*.

The author has first of all written about people, actions, and ideas that appeal to adolescents now. Second, he doesn't answer the novel's questions; he forces his readers to search for their own answers. Third, the craftsmanship is clearly defined so the student can more readily appreciate the writer's skill and so that he can be led to more complex novels. The brevity (159 pages) facilitates manipulation of the entire novel.

The Pigman by Paul Zindel is the story of three lonely people — two teen-agers, Lorraine Jensen and John Conlan, and an old widower, Mr. Angelo Pignati. It is a novel revealing the duality of life through the use of opposites in juxtaposition: adolescents and adults, death and life, honesty and phoniness, a fantasy world and reality, communication and alienation, good and evil. These theme elements are exemplified through the surface "fun and games" tone that masks deep inner alienation.

Diction is one of the techniques employed by Zindel to exemplify the themes. The speech of the characters, particularly that of John, is predominantly of a flippant tone and

employs the currently popular teen-age vernacular (unlike Holden Caulfield in *The Catcher in the Rye*, swearing is not actually included) yet what the persons involved are saying is far from being "flip." Each cries out for companionship, for understanding, for someone who truly cares about him as an individual. For example, John analyzes Lorraine in this way: "The way her old lady talks you'd think Lorraine needed internal plastic surgery and seventeen body braces, but if you ask me, all she needs is a little confidence" (p.22). John also succinctly summarizes his own and Lorraine's home situations when he explains why the telephone game is played at their friends' homes: "... at least they (their friends' parents) didn't mind if their kids used the house. Mine and Lorraine's we can't even go to. We couldn't anyway because her mother doesn't have unlimited service, and at my house my mother is a disinfectant fanatic ..." (p.23). Mr. Pignati's specialty is telling jokes and maintaining a constant flow of good will. Zindel describes his voice as "jolly" and "bubbling" and his face as always smiling (p.27).

Language is also used to enforce the theme of honesty versus phoniness. John observes that Miss King, an English teacher, tries to establish rapport between herself and her students by using slang expressions. Her attempts are unsuccessful. Mr. Pignati, on the other hand, speaks his own language and immediately establishes communication with John and Lorraine (p.21).

In addition to the various levels of English utilized by Zindel, the metaphors employed enforce theme ideas. The majority of metaphors are animal metaphors. Often when a writer compares people to animals, he is gently pushing his reader to see himself objectively and to recognize his weaknesses with a sense of humor.

Mrs. Haley teaches at Fort Morgan High School, Fort Morgan, Colorado. Reprinted under NCTE/CCTE agreement.

The novel's title introduces the first major animal metaphor. The image of the pig is a dual image. Today's reader associates the word "pig" with something cluttered, dirty, evil, or as identifying the "establishment" in a derogatory manner. Mr. Pignati, the Pigman, does live in a messy, cluttered house. But he represents to John and Lorraine security, friendship, warmth, love, and acceptance. At the same time, there is an underlying tone that something evil will occur as a result of the friendship. In direct contrast to the "pig" image is Mr. Pignati's given name, Angelo — implying angel, as a messenger or deliverer. In the Pigman's collection of "phony pigs" (p.45), Mr. Pignati lifts a "large white pig with an ugly smile on its face" (p.46). If these pigs represent the love-sentiment between the Pigman and Conchetta, why does the original pig have an ugly smile? In the pig, then, Zindel utilizes again his theme of duality. The irony is reinforced when John says of the Pigman, "... he was harmless — a little crazy — but really harmless" (p.63).

A similar idea is seen in the comparison between the Pigman and Bobo, the baboon. Mr. Pignati is identified with Bobo — they are both old, both become ill about the same time, and when Mr. Pignati learns that Bobo is dead, he seems to give up and dies also. But Bobo is described by Lorraine as "the ugliest, most vicious-looking baboon I've ever seen in my life" (p.58). Perhaps Zindel's theme of surface appearance versus reality is revealed in this comparison; although Bobo looks vicious, he is harmless in his cage and apparently forms a friendship with the Pigman — "my best friend," explains Mr. Pignati (p.58). Nevertheless, the potential for evil remains.

The baboon image as a comparison to man is used later in the novel when John says, "And maybe Lorraine and I were only a different kind of baboon in a way. Maybe we

were all baboons for that matter — big blabbing baboons — smiling away and not really caring what was going on as long as there were enough peanuts bouncing around to think about — the whole pack of us — " (p.155). This is emphasized in the last three paragraphs of the novel when John devotes two single paragraphs to the single word "baboon" and then states that they build their own cages — just as people create their own lives.

The monkey image is used in a more lighthearted tone when the three friends visit the toy department at Beekman's and see the stuffed animals. They were enjoying a happy, carefree shopping tour when Lorraine comments, "We must have looked just like three monkeys. The Pigman, John, and me — three funny little monkeys" (p.88). The toy department metaphor later, however, assumes a somber tone in the funeral scene when John observes that the whole thing was "... like being in Beekman's toy department to tell the truth — everything elaborately displayed. So many things to look at. Anything to get away from what was really happening" (p.156).

Animal imagery also reinforces Zindel's theme of what is real or honest as opposed to what is phony as the animals employed for comparison are a combination of natural and artificial ones. John and Lorraine feel themselves to be in a "jungle" when the Pigman's death occurs.

Dream images are another facet of Zindel's technique — Lorraine's dreams tend to represent psychological fears of terrible events to come, while John's "daydreaming" makes him long for death as something better than growing up into the adult world he knows. Both John and Lorraine fear growing up. John states, "Maybe I would rather be dead than to turn into the kind of grown-up people I know. What was so hot about living anyway if people

think you're a disturbing influence just because you still think about God and Death and the Universe and Love" (pp.156-7).

Two interesting metaphors comparing man and machines (another set of opposites) are found within a page of each other. John describes the police and attendants at the funeral as performing a ritual for which they do not know the meaning: "I thought of machinery -- automatic, constant, unable to be stopped" (p.157). A few paragraphs later he reverses the comparison when he describes the flashing light of the ambulance as "pulsing like a heartbeat" (p.158).

The loneliness of each of the three characters is basically the result of family situations. John, 11 years younger than his brother, is constantly compared unfavorably to him by his parents: "Kenneth never gave us any trouble," his mother remarks pointedly (p.34); while his father reminds him, "Your brother is doing very well at the Exchange. He makes a fine living, and there's still room for you" (p.66). John wants no part of his father's kind of life. He tells his father "... I want to be me. Just me. Not a phony in the crowd" (p.67). The irony here is that he wants to be an actor -- a profession requiring the playing of someone else's role. John apparently does not recognize this inconsistency or cannot face a role of his own. In the meantime, John feels his parents regard him simply as an annoyance; they refuse to see him as a person. John observes, "They just seemed tired, and I seemed out of place in the house. I had become a disturbing influence as they say" (p.94).

Lorraine's mother and father had separated while Lorraine was ill, then several years later her father died; hence, Lorraine and her mother lived alone for a number of years. Mrs. Jensen works as a nurse and never allows Lorraine to forget what a hardship it is on her:

"That school thinks it's easy for a woman to support a kid by herself -- two dollars for this, five dollars for that ... I can't even afford to get myself a pair of nylons" (p.50). Her attitude toward men is that they are all sex maniacs; Lorraine relates how her mother is constantly warning her about not opening the door to strangers, not getting into cars and the like, and she concludes: "Beware of men is what she's really saying. They have dirty minds, and they're only after one thing. Rapists are roaming the earth" (p.97). Consequently, Lorraine's social life with John is kept from her mother for fear or reproach.

Although neither John nor Lorraine are understood or accepted as individuals by their parents, both young people seem to understand and accept their parents as they are. Lorraine feels pity toward her mother.

Mr. Pignati's wife is dead and he lives in a fantasy that she is only off for a visit and will soon return. Mr. and Mrs. Pignati had apparently shared a beautiful married love that neither John nor Lorraine had witnessed in their own homes. Lorraine remarks: "I realized how many things the Pigman and his wife must have shared -- even the fun of preparing food ... It makes me think that the love between a man and a woman must be the strongest thing in the world" (p.77). She feels sad that this was not true for her own parents.

John and Lorraine are drawn to Mr. Pignati as a person who gives them all the things they ever wanted and were denied in their own families: he treats them with trust and dignity as individuals; he plays with them; he takes them places for fun; he encourages them to do zany things like eating chocolate-covered ants and roller-skating in the department store; he shares his inner, personal life with them; he is always there when they want to come to him, but he does not force himself

on them. In return, they bring to him companionship, youth, laughter, and loyalty. Zindel, however, suggests there is a limit to how far one can go in such a relationship when near the end of the novel John thinks, "Trespassing — that's what he (the Pigman) had done ... We had trespassed too — been where we didn't belong, and we were being punished for it. Mr. Pignati had paid with his life. But when he died something in us had died as well" (p.159). Again the theme of duality is exemplified, this time in relation to the subject of loneliness — each person is lonely and yearns for closeness with others; but if he goes too close, he will be punished.

Dishonesty in their parents is obvious to John and Lorraine — Mrs. Conlan does things like cheating on stamps at the supermarket, while Mrs. Jensen takes useful items from homes where she is nursing. It is ironic, then, that the three friends' relationship has been based on dishonesty — John and Lorraine, playing the "telephone game," tell the Pigman they are collecting for a charity, while Mr. Pignati pretends that his wife Conchetta is alive. Once they tell each other the truth, the bond holding them together begins to weaken and destroy what they had. It is literally the beginning of the Pigman's dying. At the same time, it seems to be the real beginning of John's and Lorraine's maturing.

In telling the story, Zindel uses a type of "diary" or "journal" form. John and Lorraine take turns writing chapters; thus the reader sees the vents from two points of view — both through the adolescents' eyes. The adult point of view must be derived through what John and Lorraine relate.

A major portion of the novel is devoted to the "game" idea. John is introduced to the

reader as a teen-age boy who plays games as an attention-getting device and also as an apparent release for his frustrations (his "bathroom bomber" and "fruit-roll" games).

John and Lorraine's friendship with Mr. Pignati is the result of a telephone game. Mr. Pignati entertains them with a series of puzzles and games, the games becoming progressively more real and more serious. At last the realization dawns that somewhere the "games" had become the game of life and death. Lorraine pleads silently: "... we didn't mean things to work out like this. We were just playing" (p.144).

Zindel involves the reader by including little games in the text of the novel, such as the snake quiz, the psychological game, and the clippings from the "Dear Alice" newspaper column. This device very effectively makes the reader a part of the story.

Games ultimately come to represent the difference between appearance and reality. At last, when John and Lorraine look at each other after the funeral, John realizes: "There was no need to smile or tell a joke or run for roller skates" (p.159).

With the book's conclusion, the reader feels that perhaps John and Lorraine have at last learned to distinguish between appearance and reality and have come to terms with it by accepting it as a challenge. John closes by writing: "They (baboons) build their own cages, we could almost hear the Pigman whisper, as he took his children with him" (p.159). The price paid for "growing up" was high; now it is their individual responsibility to make their lives worthy of the price they have paid. ○

Adolescent Reading in Calgary

by *Philomena Hauck*

What books do Calgary junior high school students read? Where do they obtain them? Who (or what) influences their choice?

In an attempt to find answers to these questions, I conducted a survey of four junior high schools during the 1977-78 school year. School librarians at each school were given 5" x 8" cards on which students were to list the books they read outside of class during the year and to provide answers to the following questions:

1. Indicate where you got the book —
 - (a) in the school library
 - (b) in the public library
 - (c) in a store
 - (d) from a friend
 - (e) other source (home, book club, etc.)
2. Did you read the book because
 - (a) a friend suggested it
 - (b) the school librarian suggested it
 - (c) a teacher suggested it
 - (d) someone else suggested it
 - (e) you picked it yourself?

The librarians undertook to explain the procedures to students and to keep track of the cards in the library. A total of 512 students took part in the study — 241 boys and 271 girls. Of these, 181 were in Grade VII, 160 in Grade VIII, and 171 in Grade IX.

Results indicated that the actual number of books read was 3,222 or an average of about 6 books per student. As is usual in such studies, girls read more than boys, though the difference was very slight (6.3 books for girls compared with 5.7 books for boys). There was no evidence of any marked increase or decrease in reading over the three years.

One hypothesis of the study — that there would be a great diversity of reading materials

Phil Hauck is Director of the Education Curriculum and Instruction Materials Centre at the University of Calgary.

— was amply borne out by the results, which encompassed a total of 1942 titles. The following table lists the most popular titles.

TWENTY MOST POPULAR TITLES

Title	Frequency
1. <i>Carrie</i>	69
2. <i>The Omen</i>	60
3. <i>Jaws</i>	58
4. <i>The Outsiders</i>	50
5. <i>My Darling My Hamburger</i>	48
6. <i>Sunshine</i>	48
7. <i>That Was Then, This Is Now</i>	42
8. <i>Phoebe</i>	40
9. <i>Deenie</i>	35
10. <i>Mr. & Mrs. Bo-Jo Jones</i>	35
11. <i>The Bermuda Triangle</i>	32
12. <i>Guinness Book of World Records</i>	28
13. <i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i>	24
14. <i>The Other Side of the Mountain</i>	20
15. <i>Go Ask Alice</i>	19
16. <i>Alive</i>	16
17. <i>The Bad News Bears</i>	15
18. <i>Sybil</i>	14
19. <i>Salem's Lot</i>	14
20. <i>Day of the Jackal</i>	13
	670

A study of the table will elicit the following information:

1. Fourteen of the most popular books were also produced as TV shows or motion pictures.
2. Eight of the top books were written specifically for adolescents. (*The Outsiders*; *My Darling My Hamburger*; *Sunshine*; *That Was Then, This Is Now*; *Phoebe*; *Deenie*; *Mr. and Mrs. Bo-Jo Jones*; and *Go Ask Alice*)
3. Books about the strange, weird, or occult (*Carrie*; *Salem's Lot*; *Sybil*; *The Bermuda Triangle* and *Alive*) are popular reading fare.

4. All the books are recent publications, or recently produced as movie or television shows.
5. Fiction is considerably more popular than nonfiction, 14 of the books being in the fiction category.
6. No Canadian title appears on the list.

Comparing favorite Calgary titles with recent Canadian and American studies reveals a considerable overall correspondence in junior high reading habits, especially in the junior novel category. Seven of the top 20 books in the Calgary study were among the top 20 in a 1974 Manitoba study.¹ Six of these were junior novels — *Phoebe*; *The Outsiders*; *Mr. and Mrs. Bo-Jo Jones*; *My Darling, My Hamburger*; *That Was Then, This Is Now*; and *Go Ask Alice*. Although the last is nonfiction, it is for adolescents and has many of the characteristics of a novel. A study of the leisure reading habits of Grades VII to XII students conducted in California in 1974² also shows six common titles in the top 20 favorites — *Go Ask Alice*; *The Outsiders*; *Sybil*; *Sunshine*; *That Was Then, This Is Now*; *My Darling, My Hamburger*.

In all three studies, too, the popular adult shocker of the day was high on the list of junior high favorites. The Manitoba study indicated that the most frequently requested title was *The Exorcist*, a book which also headed the list of California favorites. In Calgary, *Jaws* ranked second.

A preliminary study of all the books read showed that junior novels ranked highest and were followed closely by mystery and detective stories. Another type of book becoming

¹Dave Jenkinson, "Young Adult Reading in Manitoba — A Survey," *Mocassin Telegraph*, Autumn-Winter 1976, pp.18-27.

²Joanna V. McKenzie, "A Survey of Leisure Time Reading of Adolescents (Adolescent Literature Revisited After Four Years)," *Arizona English Bulletin*, April 1976, pp.13-22.

increasingly popular was the TV tie-in, the book based on shows such as "Happy Days," "Star Trek," "Starsky and Hutch," and "Kojak." This, coupled with the fact that 14 of the top favorites were later produced as TV or movie productions, indicates the vast influence of the electronic media on adolescent reading habits.

Other interesting findings include the fact that series books such as the *Hardy Boys* and *Nancy Drew* stories are not popular in Calgary. They were mentioned only 79 times in all. Harlequin romances were noted only 16 times. Animal stories were surprisingly far down the list — only 54 titles were read for a total frequency of 94. War books were less popular still — students read only 18 titles, these books being mentioned just 29 times in all.

As mentioned before, Canadian books are unpopular with Calgary young people. Only 22 titles were read, for a frequency of 65. Most popular of these were the "Anne" books by L.M. Montgomery which were mentioned 33 times. As Canadian teachers and librarians we should be concerned about this lack of interest.

As to factors which influenced the choice of books, the following table gives some clues.

WHERE BOOKS WERE OBTAINED

Source	Number of Books	% of Total
School Library	1218	37.8
Public Library	246	7.6
Friend	504	15.6
Store	682	21.2
Other Source(s) — home, club	388	12.0
No response	184	5.7

It seems that the favorite source of reading material is the school library, though young people buy a considerable number of books and receive a fair proportion from friends. One could perhaps speculate (though no survey was made of the school library collections) that students found adolescent novels in the library and bought or received from friends most of the cheap TV tie-ins.

It is also interesting to know why students read certain books. The following table will provide us with some clues.

ORIGIN OF SUGGESTION

Source	Number of Times	% of Total
Teacher	134	4.1
Friend	787	24.4
Own choice	1367	42.4
Librarian	252	7.8
Other source	361	11.2
No response	321	9.9

Adolescents appear to be little influenced in their choice of books by teachers or librarians. For the most part, those included in the study either chose the book themselves or heard of it from a friend. In view of the number of books read which have been produced for the

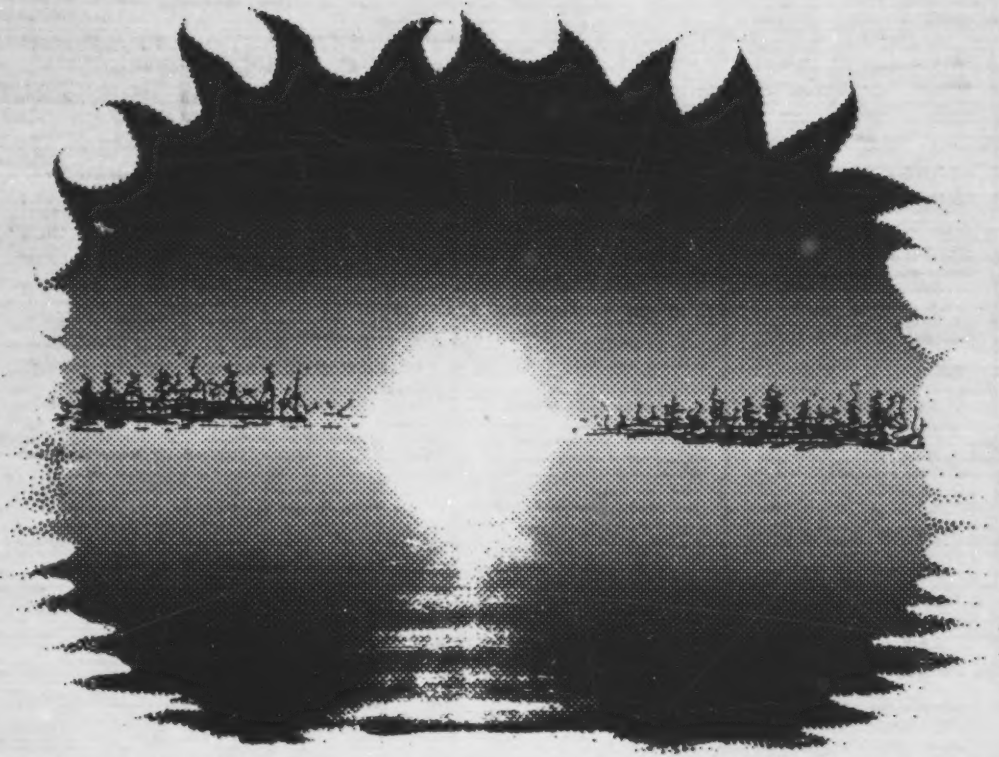
movies or television, it is likely that these media strongly affected their choice.

This study, like many recent ones, spotlights the influence of the peer group and the electronic media on teen-agers' reading habits. It also shows the popularity of the junior novel and the tremendous diversity of titles read within a given group. More than most studies, it demonstrates the wide use of the school library as a source of reading material. This is a hopeful sign. Most authorities now agree that a love of good reading is best fostered by having available a wide variety of books which students *can* and *will* read. Teachers and librarians can build on this use of the library to foster and extend reading habits.

As McKenzie points out:

The love of reading is easy to kill, and many students find that books selected for them for their English classes bewilder, bemuse, and befuddle them so they can easily grow to hate reading. While stimulating library taste is certainly part of the English teachers' job, there first has to be an appetite to stimulate. Teachers who keep informed not only about what students *ought* to read but also about what the students *like* to read will be doing much to stimulate and improve literary appetite.³ O

³*Ibid*, p.22.



Sky and water
merge
in one blazing fire
set by the sun.
Soon it will burn out
leaving the black charcoal
of night.

- *Bill Van Veelen*
Grade 11
Ross Sheppard High School
Edmonton

Teaching the Novel an unpessimistic point of view

by R. Glenn Martin

Whatever else may be said about novels, they are long. For teaching purposes, this non-earthshaking statement has certain practical consequences. The short story (whose shortness, like that of the lyric poem and the 30-minute TV show or the five-minute pop record, establishes the meaning of "long" as applied to novels) can be handled in ways that are out of the question with the novel. One can, for instance, have the short story read aloud; not so the novel.

Whether the novel is, as Burton suggests (1970, p.88), more powerful than the short story is, I think, moot. But it is certainly, by virtue of sheer length, much more likely to be a complex document. Its length requires the reader to keep in mind things that were said twenty or thirty thousand words ago. Even a P.G. Wodehouse or an Agatha Christie can send a reader scurrying back through earlier pages to recover some detail about Lord Emsworth or an earlier remark of Poirot's.

How can this mass of complexities and this sheer burden of verbiage be accommodated in any responsible way in the severely limited time and contact of the classroom? The assigning of novels, especially to students of modest reading speed, approaches almost the scope of independent study. Unless the novel is read at a chapter a day by the class-at-large (which seems one of the deadlier ways to sabotage a class), the student is faced with a sizable self-directed operation. A Harlequin romance may not be all that formidable a challenge — but *Moby Dick*, *Crime and Punishment*, *A Passage to India*, *A Tale of Two Cities* certainly are, and so are most of the

novels English teachers would like their students to read.

At least two kinds of problems occur as students try to meet the challenge. One is that the length and complexity of the novel may discourage them. They get mired in the sheer physical process of getting through the book. This results partly from their unfamiliarity with the genre (or, worse, from serious reading problems that make the process especially difficult), and partly from difficulties students may have with managing their own time. These sorts of problems are the ones which I believe provide the most obvious opportunities for the teacher to do for the author's book what the author himself or herself has not already done for it — and rightly so. Authors of most "serious" high-school novels are addressing not tenth-graders but adults. "Teaching" someone to read a novel is, in part, a matter of inviting that person to an adult perspective, "motivating" readers (to use our profession's most widespread cliché) to stretch their minds and their perceptions to adult dimensions. The world of adult fiction is one of the fastest ways in which an adolescent can gain insight into adulthood. Serious fiction poses more complex problems and subtler solutions than, for instance, most TV drama. Teen-agers, not being adults, are naturally not dependably familiar with what authors assume in their readers. The problem of evil (to use the philosophical term) is posed much more deeply in *Crime and Punishment* and *Moby Dick* than in a typical "Mannix" episode: why did the criminal do it? In "Mannix", no answer, and no answer intended. But, our novel says implicitly, let's think about it. Why would he do it — what drives him to it? It is at least in this sense that *Moby Dick* or *Crime and Punishment* can be viewed, and not just snobbishly, as "better" than the typical TV treatment of evil: they cope with our more

Dr. Glenn Martin, past president of Alberta English Council and past editor of this journal, teaches secondary English methods at the University of Alberta. This article is reprinted from *Skylark* under NCTE/CCTE agreements.

thoughtful and troublesome questions about this abiding human topic. They offer much more material for "interpretation" as a main purpose in the literature classroom.

To take a thematic approach to *Moby Dick* is to invite students to consider the book as a possible treatment of "evil" in the vivid forms of Ahab and of the white whale. This may not do justice to Melville (I don't think it does), but it provides a simplified point of entry for the student who has not been spending years puzzling over the world's evils, as most thoughtful adults have and as Melville presumably did. Students obviously have a "talent" for this kind of concern, but, among other things, they haven't had time for it yet. The literature class makes some time for it, not because we teachers of literature are great philosophers or know the answers to the "great" questions we can ask, but because the great adult questions are, through no coincidence, the ones which have also fascinated and plagued the world's significant communicators.

This sort of "thematic" approach is not really "teaching" *Moby Dick* — it is merely providing one basis on which a person may enter Melville's world. It taps the student's own powerful built-in "motivation" to start considering the great questions — the ones that affect not only the state of the world but his or her own most crucial individual choices.

"Theme" vanishes, however, as Melville takes over. *Moby Dick* is not a book about evil. It is a book about Melville's world, in which evil and a host of other great questions acquire new dimensions. Students may well reject Melville's world, but their own worlds are enlarged in the process. This, however, is not the teacher's job, but Melville's. (The teacher also may, of course, enlarge the student's world, but that is in his or her own right as a mature, creative adult, not as a "teacher" of

Melville's point of view, which he expressed better than we can, or there would be no point in our students reading him!)

The teacher's job is, fortunately or otherwise, the much lesser one of "clearing the way" so that literature can finally speak for itself. The teacher may have to clear away prejudices. "Why do we have to read a story about whales? They're in danger of becoming extinct, and this book seems to be all about killing them. Shouldn't we be *against* that?" "Why do you think Melville is in favor of killing whales?" "Well, isn't that what the book is about?" "Are books about war always in favor of war?" *Et cetera*. Not to mention the hosts of other problems that students may have in approaching a great adult document like *Moby Dick* — some of them far more urgent and immediate like how to manage one's time. These are tasks we can do as teachers of literature and as friends to our students — to advise them and work with them on the whole gamut of things that separate students from novelists who, if we do our job, can become even more important friends to our students than we are capable of being!

The preceding, in terms of a "levels of response" view like that which seems implied in such perspectives as that of Purves, is mostly at the least sophisticated level, "engagement" (Purves and Rippere, 1968), or what I would prefer to call "simple enjoyment or non-enjoyment" (Martin, 1976) — opening the student's mind and heart to the possibility of finding the novel a fascinating as well as "challenging" excursion. Sidetrips into Purves's third level (interpretation, theme) are relevant only to the extent that they create curiosity — or, more accurately, tap it.

But I think there is additional teaching work to be done that stays for a while at this third level, with serious literature. To read,

more or less on one's own, a powerful novel like *Moby Dick* or even *Catcher in the Rye* is a shaking experience. The student who has opened himself to a major novel needs people to share it with. Students need to talk about it, to unburden themselves of the sheer impact of it. Where better than in the literature class? I think it is a characteristic of "literature" as opposed to casual, competent writing, that it changes readers, and they need a way to try out their new selves — to find out what they have become as a result of the reading, to test the validity of their own responses.

Perhaps the answer to the trauma of this level, when it really shakes the reader up, is to help the student-reader look beyond the immediate interpretative impact: the reader who merely weeps at the death of the crew in *Moby Dick* has overlooked the survival of Ishmael and the meanings that that survival may have. Did Ishmael survive only so that someone could write the book? Or is there more to his survival than that? More to *our* survival?

Melville, fortunately, and like most great artists (I think), does not tell us. And we, and our students, are the richer for his silence. ○

References

- Burton, Dwight L. *Literature Study in the High Schools*, 3d ed. New York and Toronto: 1970.
- Martin, R. Glenn. "Levels of Response to Literature," *Alberta English Notes*, Vol. 7, No.5, June 1976, pp.1-4.
- Purves, Alan C., and Victoria Rippere. *Elements of Writing About a Literary Work: A Study of Response to Literature*. Champaign, Illinois: 1968.

***From the University of Calgary Conference
on the Canadian Novel, February, 1978 ...***

**The Most Significant
Canadian Novels**

The First Hundred Novels

Author Title

Laurence	<i>The Stone Angel</i>
Roy	<i>The Tin Flute</i>
Richler	<i>The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz</i>
Ross	<i>As For Me and My House</i>
Davies	<i>Fifth Business</i>
Leacock	<i>Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town</i>
Buckler	<i>The Mountain and The Valley</i>
Mitchell	<i>Who Has Seen the Wind</i>
MacLennan	<i>Watch that Ends the Night</i>
MacLennan	<i>Two Solitudes</i>
Laurence	<i>The Diviners</i>
Lowry	<i>Under the Volcano</i>
Haliburton	<i>The Clockmaker</i>
Watson	<i>The Double Hook</i>
Richler	<i>St. Urbain's Horseman</i>
Ringuet	<i>Thirty Acres</i>
Hemon	<i>Maria Chapdelaine</i>
MacLennan	<i>Barometer Rising</i>
Munro	<i>Lives of Girls and Women</i>
Carrier	<i>La Guerre, Yes Sir!</i>
Atwood	<i>Surfacing</i>
Callaghan	<i>Such is My Beloved</i>
Grove	<i>Settlers of the Marsh</i>
Laurence	<i>A Jest of God</i>
Wiseman	<i>The Sacrifice</i>
Duncan	<i>The Imperialist</i>
Hebert	<i>Kamouraska</i>
Wilson	<i>Swamp Angel</i>

Klein	<i>The Second Scroll</i>
Grove	<i>Fruits of the Earth</i>
Callaghan	<i>The Loved and the Lost</i>
Cohen	<i>Beautiful Losers</i>
Grove	<i>The Master of the Mill</i>
Davies	<i>The Manticore</i>
MacLennan	<i>Each Man's Son</i>
Richardson	<i>Wacousta</i>
Wiebe	<i>The Temptations of Big Bear</i>
Laurence	<i>The Fire-Dwellers</i>
Davies	<i>World of Wonders</i>
Kroetsch	<i>The Studhorse Man</i>
Montgomery	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>
Blais	<i>Mad Shadows</i>
Callaghan	<i>More Joy in Heaven</i>
Ostenso	<i>Wild Geese</i>
Roy	<i>Where Nests the Water Hen</i>
Roy	<i>The Cashier</i>
Kirby	<i>The Golden Dog</i>
Blais	<i>A Season in the Life of Emmanuel</i>
Atwood	<i>The Edible Woman</i>
Callaghan	<i>They Shall Inherit the Earth</i>
Moore	<i>The Luck of Ginger Coffey</i>
Brooke	<i>The History of Emily Montague</i>
Davies	<i>Leaven of Malice</i>
Lemelin	<i>The Town Below</i>
Aquin	<i>Prochain Episode</i>
Connor	<i>The Man from Glengarry</i>
Moore	<i>Judith Hearne</i>
Roy	<i>Street of Riches</i>
Birney	<i>Turvey</i>
Grove	<i>A Search For America</i>
De la Roche	<i>Jalna</i>

Theriault	<i>Agaguk</i>
Grove	<i>In Search of Myself</i>
Richler	<i>Son of a Smaller Hero</i>
Davies	<i>A Mixture of Frailties</i>
MacLennan	<i>Return of the Sphinx</i>
Engel	<i>Bear</i>
Stead	<i>Grain</i>
De Mille	<i>A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder</i>
Godfrey	<i>The New Ancestors</i>
Raddall	<i>The Nymph and the Lamp</i>
Cohen	<i>The Favourite Game</i>
Roy	<i>The Hidden Mountain</i>
Wiebe	<i>Peace Shall Destroy Many</i>
Kreisel	<i>The Rich Man</i>
Wright	<i>The Week-End Man</i>
O'Hagan	<i>Tay John</i>
Marlyn	<i>Under the Ribs of Death</i>
Atwood	<i>Lady Oracle</i>
Carrier	<i>Floralie, Where Are You</i>
Lowry	<i>Hear Us O Lord</i>
Roy	<i>The Road Past Altamont</i>
Lemelin	<i>The Plouffe Family</i>
Laurence	<i>This Side Jordan</i>
Callaghan	<i>Close to the Sun Again</i>
Carrier	<i>Is It the Sun, Philibert?</i>
Parker	<i>The Seats of the Mighty</i>
Knister	<i>White Narcissus</i>
Roberts	<i>The Heart of the Ancient Wood</i>
De Gaspe	<i>Canadians of Old</i>
Wiebe	<i>The Blue Mountains of China</i>
Langevin	<i>Dust Over the City</i>
Raddall	<i>His Majesty's Yankees</i>
Wilson	<i>The Innocent Traveller</i>
Godbout	<i>Knife on the Table</i>
Hood	<i>White Figure White Ground</i>

Kroetsch	<i>The Words of My Roaring</i>
MacDougall	<i>Execution</i>
Connor	<i>Glengarry School Days</i>
Richler	<i>The Incomparable Atuk</i>

The First Ten Novels

Author	Title
Laurence	<i>The Stone Angel</i>
Davies	<i>Fifth Business</i>
Ross	<i>As For Me And My House</i>
Buckler	<i>The Mountain and the Valley</i>
Roy	<i>The Tin Flute</i>
Richler	<i>The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz</i>
Watson	<i>The Double Hook</i>
MacLennan	<i>Watch that Ends the Night</i>
Mitchell	<i>Who has Seen the Wind</i>
Laurence	<i>The Diviners</i>

The First Ten Works of Various Genres

Author	Title
Klinck	<i>Literary History of Canada</i>
Frye	<i>The Bush Garden</i>
Pratt	<i>Collected Poems</i>
Leacock	<i>Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town</i>
Jones	<i>Butterfly on a Rock</i>
Moodie	<i>Roughing It in the Bush</i>
Atwood	<i>Survival</i>
Laurence	<i>The Stone Angel</i>
Ross	<i>As For Me And My House</i>
Birney	<i>Collected Poems</i>

O

canadian novel conference, calgary

like scott
we hobnobb'd with the literati
dropped names titles
read unread

many of the bigs
were there and many more
not so big
academics too dry as dust

we knew
some of each at sessions
cocktails meals
morsels we knew

each other too
and that made all the difference

tom gee

Give the Kids a Head Start

Windsor, Ont. (CP) — To instill a love for reading and get a child off on a head start before he enters kindergarten, Dr. Wilfred Innerd, associate professor in the faculty of education at University of Windsor, suggests reading to the child regularly.

"I don't mean sitting the child across the room from you while you read a book," he said in an interview. "I mean sitting the child on your lap and showing him what you are reading. Point out the various things in the illustrations and make it clear so the child understands."

Innerd suggested books with lots of action and various characters performing various roles.

"I don't like to endorse brand names, but for the action involved, I would suggest Richard Scarry books."

He said not to be overly concerned about sexism in books at such an early age. "The first thing to do is get the child interested in reading. The sex roles can be straightened out later."

Talk to Him as Person

Another aspect of pre-school education is to "bathe the child in language." This means talking to him as if he were another person who could understand every word you are saying, even though he can't.

Innerd said speaking baby talk to a child who has not yet learned to speak will only confuse and retard his ability to speak properly.

He rejected the role of television as an early childhood educator. "Television is a passive thing that does a child's thinking for him and does not encourage him to think for himself. Get him away from the television any way you can." The lack of mathematical skills among children concerned Innerd more than the lack of reading skills. "Children tend to learn very little about math at home, and they go through a school system being taught by teachers who don't like math either."

Start at Home

Parents can give their children a head start with mathematical concepts at home through the use of counting toys, blocks and numbered cards.

As soon as a child is old enough, let him hand the money to the clerk in a variety store, Innerd said. Teach him to count change or count out the money for the bill. As he gets better, let him take the money in alone to pay for the goods.

Such educational activities, whether they be associated with reading, math or writing, should be incorporated in trips outside the home. "Every trip, whether it is to the park or the library, can be educational and of value."

O



- Joanne North
Grade 11
Ross Sheppard C.H.S.
Edmonton

Home

It's good to be home
Walking up the front snow-covered drive
Stepping carefully in this morning's tracks
Climbing the back step and
throwing weight against the frozen door
that sticks every winter

It's good to be home
To be greeted by a wagging tail and a wet tongue
To smell soup simmering on the stove
To hear familiar voices

It's good to be home
Away
Away from the biting cold, warm and secure

So good to be home
To retreat to the back room
and curl up in the rocker with a knitted Afghan
To listen to Bowser snore
To stare out the iced window and think ...

It's good to be home

The Day I Baby-Sat

by *Connie Flanagan*

I rang the doorbell and heard footsteps coming.

"Why Janet, Come in."

I walked in and saw Terry, the boy I had to baby-sit, otherwise known as Terry the Terror, Terrible Terry, and Tornado Terry. I was doomed!

I looked around and saw his chemistry set. "He's probably Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," I thought.

"Bye Terry," I heard Mrs. Tye say. "Be a good boy."

Terry went into his room. I followed to make sure that he wasn't going to mix something weird with his chemistry set. He was at his closet taking out a lump of clay. He went to his desk and started molding a person.

When he was finished, he mixed something with his chemistry set. He poured it over the clay figure. It suddenly started to grow! It grew and grew. Then when it was about five metres tall, it stopped growing.

Terry had mixed up something else, and now he poured that over the figure. It started to move!

I stared at it and then I said to Terry, "What did you do to it?!"

He shrugged and said, "Not much."

The clay monster went into the kitchen. It tossed pots and pans all over the place. It ripped the back door off its hinges and ran outside. I looked out the window and saw it tear the fence down.

I ran to phone the police. Terry was now watching a western and eating popcorn.

"Terry!" I shrieked.

"Yaaass?" he asked, still watching the program.

"You ... you ... you ...!"

I had forgotten about phoning the police, I was so mad.

I looked out the window again and found that the clay thing had eaten the swing set, and was starting on the woodshed. I had to do something!

I found Terry's "cookbook" and flipped through the pages.

"Here it is!" I exclaimed aloud. It was called "Kill and Shrink." I mixed it up and went into the backyard.

The clay monster had just finished the first garbage can. I poured the potion into the second can. He ate the second can in a hurry — the potion must have tasted good — and started to make some funny wheezing sound.

Soon it was just a lump of clay again.

I spent the rest of the evening cleaning up the mess. When Terry's mother came home, you can guess what happened to Terry.

I used to be in ceramics, but I quit! ○

The author is a Grade IV student St. Gerard School, Grande Prairie.



REVIEWS

New Books from NCTE

Using Literature in the Elementary Classroom

edited by John Warren Stewig and Sam L. Sebesta

To give children the foundations for a broader literacy, teachers have to do more than drill them in the basics of reading and writing, as found in textbooks. In *Using Literature in the Elementary Classroom*, just off the press at the National Council of Teachers of English, six teacher-specialists in children's literature discuss many ways in which tradebooks can be used in class.

Using Literature was edited by John Warren Stewig of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Sam L. Sebesta of the University of Washington. In their six essays on aspects of literacy development, the contributors share the belief that a combination of textbooks and carefully selected children's tradebooks spurs the best growth in literacy.

"These teachers like literature," Sebesta says in his Preface. "They like to use it in the classroom. They have had good results — and they tell us how they got them. They have some reasons for believing that literature achieves some of the skills learnings connected with language, while achieving a main effect, which is intrinsic motivation. There is sanity in this position."

Barbara Pilon of Worcester State College, Massachusetts, suggests a range of activities teachers can use to show children how the English language continually grows and changes. Alden J. Moe of Purdue University recommends certain tradebooks to help children in the early grades maintain a lively pace of language acquisition. Helen Felsenthal of Research for Better Schools, Philadelphia, offers provocative teaching strategies for discussing books of fiction and nonfiction with children.

Book illustrations are John Warren Stewig's topic. "If children are seldom encouraged to study illustrations, so they are even less often asked to translate what they have learned in this visual mode into the verbal mode," he comments. "Putting thoughts about what was learned visually into spoken words is an important challenge all children should experience." His suggested tradebook activities include comparing reactions to different illustrators' interpretations of the same story.

Richard Kolczynski of Ball State University looks at the ways in which good literature motivates children to write their own stories or do other follow-up activities on their own initiative. Mary Jett-Simpson of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee discusses the role of creative dramatics in aiding comprehension, not just of the facts of a story but also of its broader significance.

Each contributor supplies a list of appropriate children's books for given activities and a bibliography of background information for teachers.

(73 pages, paper. ISBN: 0-8141-5617-1. LC:78-9273. NCTE Stock No. 56177. Price:\$3.95; NCTE members, \$3.50.)

Nobody Listens to Andrew

by Elizabeth Guilfoile

Elizabeth Guilfoile, author of *Nobody Listens to Andrew*, will be honored by the Elementary Section of the National Council of Teachers of English at the Closing General Session of the National Conference on Language Arts in the Elementary School, Sunday, March 12, at 10:30 a.m. at the Indianapolis Hilton Hotel. This year marks the 21st anniversary of the publication of her book, which set a trend by employing a vocabulary that beginning readers could understand without assistance. Its publication led to more tradebooks for children at the "first reader" stage.

"It's been a wonderful thing for children," Guilfoile has commented. "If there's one thing that delights a child, it is to be able to say, 'I can read a book all by myself.'"

Guilfoile wrote *Nobody Listens to Andrew* as she was about to retire from more than 20 years as an elementary school principal to teach high school English. The book was a response to a need she saw for entertaining books for beginners. The story was suggested by an incident in the summer of 1949, when she was visiting friends near Duluth. Bears had been sighted in the neighborhood, searching for food and water. In *Nobody Listens to*

Andrew, a small boy finds a bear in his bed but cannot get the grown-ups to listen to his news.

Author and children's literature specialist Lee Bennett Hopkins will present the citation to Guilfoile at the session March 12. The citation reads in part: "The Elementary Section is proud to acknowledge Elizabeth Guilfoile, who in 104 words made us listen!"

The Elementary Section of NCTE is made up of teachers and administrators of language arts programs in elementary schools throughout the United States and in Canada. It is one of three Sections of the National Council of Teachers of English.

DHA:3/2/78

Cricket in a Thicket, Listen, Rabbit, et al

by Aileen Fisher

Indianapolis, Ind., March 12 — Aileen Fisher, author of numerous books of poetry including *Cricket in a Thicket* and *Listen, Rabbit* is the recipient of the 1978 NCTE Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children. The award was announced by author Lee Bennett Hopkins, chair of the award selection committee, at noon today at the Closing General Session of the 1978 National Conference on Language Arts in the Elementary School, at the Indianapolis Hilton Hotel.

Fisher, who lives near Boulder, Colorado, grew up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, near Iron River. She began writing while a student at the University of Chicago and the University of Missouri in the 1920s, and began devoting full time to writing in 1932.

Fisher is "equally adept at observing nature and children," Charlotte Huck and Doris Young Kuhn wrote in *Teaching Children's Literature in the Elementary School*. Her work captures "the fun and gaiety of the child's everyday world."

Fisher herself has commented that poetry is "a rhythmical piece of writing that leaves the reader feeling that life is a little richer than before, a little more full of wonder, beauty, or just plain delight."

Her books of poetry also include *Do Bears Have Mothers Too?* *Feathered Ones and Furry*, *Going Barefoot*; *In One Door and Out the Other*; *My Cat Has Eyes of Sapphire Blue*, *Where Does Everyone Go?* and *In the Middle of the Night*. She has also written plays and programs for children, biography, and books on natural history and ecology. For her writing, Fisher has drawn heavily on nature in the Rocky Mountains outside Boulder, where for years she and the late lawyer-writer Olive Rabe lived in a rustic cabin on a 200-acre ranch.

Formal presentation of the award to Aileen Fisher will be made November 24 at the Books for Children Luncheon during the Annual Convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, in Kansas City, Missouri. The emblem of the award is a medallion designed by Karla Kuskin, author/illustrator of a number of picture books including *Any Me I Want to Be* and *The Bear Who Saw the Spring*. A citation with the medallion design will be presented to Fisher. Seals for book jackets, imprinted with the medallion design, are available from the National Council of Teachers of English.

Nominations for the 1979 Excellence in Poetry Award will open September 1, 1978, and close January 1, 1979. They should be sent to: NCTE Poetry Award, NCTE Headquarters, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801. Nominees to be considered should have published a body of poetry for children, ages 3 to 13.

DHA: 3/1/78

Word War

Come out!
You are being difficult,
Hiding, like an obstinate child behind a curtain
I know you're in here,
 somewhere ...

Come out!
Let me see you silhouetted
Against this blank white sheet
Come face me
Let me see you or your reflection

Come out now!
Let me wrestle you in the open
Let's finalize this battle
Show me your weakness
 or strength

- Joanne North
Grade 11
Ross Sheppard C.H.S.
Edmonton